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THE DIAL

A FORTNIGHTLY

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THE DIAL

A FORTNIGHTLY

Miss Lowell Abides Our Question

NO PHRASE IS COMMONER than that which asserts that the poet is born not made, and certainly while the assertion is not in all respects unimpeachable it is at bottom sound enough. Used by the intelligent the phrase is taken to mean that whatever the poet writes is "inspired"; that he cannot possibly obtain any control of the strange instrument which has been given him; that he is himself, indeed, nothing but that instrument, a kind of haunted flute, to which from time to time, whether the flute wishes it or not, a daemon curves his lip. It is easy, too easy, to derive from that hypothesis the conclusion that it is useless for the poet to pay much heed to technique, that it is impudent of the critic to demand of the poet—who, poor devil, merely does desperately what his daemon flogs him forward to do—that he should take into account either principle or taste, since that is equivalent to asking his daemon to do so—"and what does a daemon know of dactyl or homophone?" But the intelligent poet and the intelligent critic, though they grant that there must always be at bottom this daemon of the subconscious, to set the waters darkly in motion, will insist that the poet should, and can, take his part in the affair. The daemon cannot be created; but he can be summoned, more or less at will, by the muttering of a tactful enchantment; with patience, the poet can, as it were, train him. And, generally speaking, if may be said that a poet grows more or less in proportion to his achievement of this control.

But that is not to say that the education of the daemon is either safe or easy. It is first of all necessary to perceive accurately his true nature, and the extent of his abilities; what he is not in the beginning fitted to perform he cannot be driven to perform, either by cajolery or command. Nor is it a simple matter for the poet to understand himself in this regard. Few poets have done so. Keats did, Heine did, Villon did; Dante also, and Shakespeare, and, of a minor sort again, Mallarmé and Verlaine. But how many, like Wordsworth and Tennyson and Coleridge, have less often un-

derstood than misunderstood themselves! It is, after all, the commonest cause of a poet's failures. And the commonest form which this sort of failure takes is that in which, clearly enough, the poet has mistaken not precisely the character of his daemon—that is not always so likely an error—but rather its strength, and has set for it a task, or tasks, which it cannot possibly, or at any rate adequately, perform, tasks beneath which it is likely to become deformed or even to die.

It may be said that every poet, at some point or other in his career, encounters this disaster, from which he may or may not recover. True, but to know at what point in his career this occurs, and for what reasons, and to what extent, is of great importance it may do much to illuminate for us the case of that poet. It is one among many possible approaches to any such esthetic problem. For some cases it may prove inadequate; for others it may supply the essential key. The case of Miss Amy Lowell is, I am inclined to think, of the latter sort; and it is for that reason that these preliminary soundings have been taken.

For Miss Lowell has in this respect only too freely put herself into our hands. As I have remarked of her before, she has always emphasized the fact that a great deal of the success of a poet depends on unremitting hard work; she has, indeed, carried this theory almost to the fetichistic extreme to which Flaubert carried it, with his zeal for the inevitable word, his patience with the file. From the outset of her poetic career she has been aware of the necessity of educating her daemon. The question arises therefore whether she has properly understood her own abilities; and whether, moreover, zeal for the inevitable word or patience with the file are of any value save in hands instinctively sure. Are Miss Lowell's hands instinctively sure? But let us take up the other question first, to which the answer will perhaps be the answer to both.

This answer must, I think, be negative. I shall not try to press the point too hard, but I think it is incontestable that the secret of Miss Lowell's

career as a poet has been the fact that from beginning to end she has misunderstood, overestimated, and consistently misdirected her abilities. What were, to begin with, her abilities? Not an easy question to answer, certainly, even for Miss Lowell, if she were resolute; but we must attempt a solution, and I think we shall be able to approach it by selecting from her new volume, *Pictures of the Floating World* (Macmillan), the poem entitled *Solitaire*, which originally appeared, if I am not mistaken, in the first of the *Imagist Anthologies*:

When night drifts along the streets of the city,
And sifts down between the uneven roofs,
My mind begins to peek and peer.
It plays at ball in old, blue Chinese gardens,
And shakes wrought dice-cups in Pagan temples
Amid the broken flutings of white pillars.
It dances with purple and yellow crocuses in its hair,
And its feet shine as they flutter over drenched grasses.
How light and laughing my mind is,
When all the good folk have put out their bedroom candles,
And the city is still!

The tone of that is clear and unforced; it is a mood genuine and delicate, and Miss Lowell has allowed it to find expression through exactly the requisite simplicity of phrase and rhythm. The mood was not only well perceived, it was well felt. Here was Miss Lowell's daemon speaking in its own person, not speaking greatly or profoundly, it is true, but speaking at all events with charm and grace, on a minor note of magic. And this perhaps is at bottom, or should have been, if wisely encouraged, Miss Lowell's true note. For in what other work of Miss Lowell, except sporadically and brokenly, does one find the same magic? In *Patterns* it is now and then perceptible, in the *City of Falling Leaves*, in *Vernal Equinox*, at the close of *The Hammers* in the passage beginning "Marble likeness of an emperor," intermittently in *Appuldurcombe Park*, in *Malmaison*. Once in a while among the many ambitious walls of Miss Lowell's later edifices has fallen only for a moment this clear soft light, but with how little encouragement from Miss Lowell, how little perception, apparently, of its real value! She is busy again in a moment with the divers energies of her many paraphernalia for building; walls, roofs, towers, kingdoms even, must be erected; and in all this bewildering and intoxicating clamor she has little time for a visitor so timid and fugitive. Magic perches perhaps on the boom of a derrick for an instant, but the noise is too much for her—she is soon gone.

Miss Lowell has therefore, we may say, been too ambitious: she has set her daemon a task out of all proportion to its slender strength. This is not to say that she has by any means been a failure—far from it. No, Miss Lowell has both energy and

cleverness; and, her ambition to be a great poet once having been fired, she set these to work with results which one must confess are astonishing and often delightful. Astonishing, yes, and very entertaining reading, but not great poetry, and in many cases not poetry at all. For the point which must here be made with severe precision is that the work of a poet, if it is to have magic, or be poetry, must originally be suggested by the daemon, must be "inspired" (objectionable word!), must be genuinely and obsessively felt, felt through the poet's temperament, not merely discovered by the ambitious explorations of the mind. The poet must be the victim of the idea, not the idea the victim of the poet. Miss Lowell seems to think otherwise. She observes:

The cat and I
Together in the sultry night
Waited.
He greatly desired a mouse;
I, an idea.

There you have it! Miss Lowell's mind is restless and energetic, and she is determined to write poetry, come what may.

And what is the result? What indeed but that Miss Lowell has set herself the most quixotic of tasks, namely, the simulation of poetry. One is prone to give Miss Lowell so much credit for intelligence that it is difficult to believe that she does not perceive the impossibility of this; for while it is not impossible to simulate the surfaces of poetry, to imitate its technique, to go, as it were, through the motions, it is impossible to simulate its depths. The mood out of which genuine poetry springs is both inevitable and individual, an unforeseeable reaction to an unforeseeable situation. Reactions of this sort are reflex, purely instinctive, can perhaps be induced, but cannot be compelled. I do not mean to say that Miss Lowell never reacts in this way. But I do mean to say that her reactions are few and slight; and that for want of more reactions, and reactions more acute, she has increasingly had recourse to a kind of esthetic falsification. When she is visited by a genuine mood, she exaggerates it cold-bloodedly to the point of caricature; when the mood denies her its comfort, she sets before herself something to which she thinks at any rate she *should* react, painstakingly calling to her own attention this or that minute aspect of it; with results that are very likely to be excruciating.

Of this sort of thing *Pictures of the Floating World* affords manifold evidence: if we except her first venture it is the poorest of Miss Lowell's books, a book in which she seems almost deliberately to have paraded her mistakes. *Solitaire* there is, to be sure, and *Vernal Equinox*, and *Appuldur-*

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combe Park, and To a Certain Critic, and a few others among the Lacquer Prints and Chinoiserie—flute notes clear enough, with a sort of sharp variable sweetness. But for the most part the book is of that sort which any sensitive judge must pronounce clever but dull. These are not poems, but the simulacra of poems. With what desperation Miss Lowell, in her determination to be original, flags her poor vocabulary, rifles Roget for epithets, chops her lines to a sort of poetic mincemeat, resorts to effeminate expletives! And all to achieve only a sterility somewhat oddly freaked and brindled. It is not enough merely to observe bizarre details; it is not enough to sprinkle a page or poem with unfamiliar words. Details must be introduced naturally or not at all; they must be the details on which the mood seizes, not merely details which are scientifically true. Words must be used instinctively or not at all; they must be the words on which the mood seizes, not merely words which, to the calculating cold eye, seem clever. Miss Lowell sins repeatedly in these matters. The note is forced, histrionic; the approach is not poetic so much as scientific; she seeks to overwhelm by an accumulation of minutely accurate details, a capitating literality. At its best this method produces merely such a freezing harmlessness as the dahlias "meticulously quilled"; at its worst it becomes an unendurable falsetto, as when the stars are compared to languid pulses "squeezed through a mist." This sort of thing is the plainest of charlatanism, inexcusable even if Miss Lowell is herself the dupe of it.

The fact therefore becomes clear, in this volume, that Miss Lowell has attempted poetry on a scale for

which she is better suited by intellect than by temperament, but for which neither is truly adequate. Compelled to become a "conscious artist" by her lack of a rich emotivity, compelled further, as a "conscious artist," by the lack of a fine sensibility, to fall back on sheer cleverness, Miss Lowell has sought one theory after another like so many nostrums—free verse, the unrelated method, polyphonic prose—all, in the end, to achieve a poetry full no doubt of esthetic shock, but almost totally lacking in the warmth or magic or beauty which is the contribution of the subconscious. The touch is coarse; the technique is clumsy: she descends from a flash of insight to the fatuities of an afternoon tea. She has her good moments, it is true. Her grotesques are sometimes excellent. But even these are only too often overwrought to the point of absurdity, end in bathos or on a note of flatness.

Perhaps, after all, Miss Lowell came nearest to finding her true level in polyphonic prose: had the polyphonic element in Can Grande's Castle been subdued, or even eliminated, the four narratives in that book might have been superb. For a temperament in which energy is the dominant characteristic—a temperament adapted to a rich environment, and thereby, through a sort of abrasion, superficially refined, but not by nature finely perceptive or exquisitely sensitive—it should, I think, be clear that prose rather than poetry is the suitable instrument; for the prose writer can more safely and more extensively than the poet set about the self-cultivation which enriches the "conscious artist." It is only the genius—among poets—who knows how to grow.

CONRAD AIKEN.

Liberalism in Japan

II. THE ECONOMIC FACTOR

IN MY PREVIOUS ARTICLE I discussed the intellectual change which is furthering the growth of liberalized institutions in Japan. The word "metaphysical" was ventured upon in describing the change. I can imagine the scorn with which some greet the idea that intellectual changes can lead to political changes. People love to stand on their heads intellectually, and so it is that the Marxians who have given the world its best modern demonstration of the power of ideas and of intellectual leadership, are the ones who most deny that these things have any efficacy. Even the most hardened upholder of the impotency of intellectual and moral forces might however concede that *without* certain

changes of mental attitude and disposition, there are certain alterations of society which cannot be accomplished, that intellectual changes are at least a negative condition, a *sine qua non*. And this concession will be met not with an admission but an assertion that it is fortunate for the prospects of liberalism in Japan that the intellectual modifications already dealt with are accompanied and reinforced by active and aggressive economic changes.

The war tremendously hastened the industrial transition in Japan. In 1918 alone the number of factories in Tokyo doubled in spite of extraordinary increases in prior years. The last five years have practically transformed Japan from an agra-

rian into an industrial state. For there is today actual shortage of farm labor in that country, although the wages of farm hands have more than doubled. The urban factories have been absorbing labor at such a rate that for the time being at least the old plea for territorial expansion to take up the growth of population does not hold. In consequence of this expedited development Japan has been plunged into the labor problem—and plunged with exceedingly little preparation.

The remote and speculative observer is given to supposing that a new country which is undergoing the industrial revolution at this late date will surely learn from the experience of the other countries that passed through it earlier. Why wait for all the evils of child labor, woman's labor, long hours, unsanitary factories, congested housing, slums, and so forth to show themselves, when experience has demonstrated how surely they follow upon a *laissez-faire* policy, and also how legislation and administration may at least alleviate their worst evils? Especially would it seem as if a paternalistic government like that of Japan would do something, if only because of the general influence exercised by her model, Germany. But practically no foresight was manifested. Certain factory laws on the Western pattern were indeed passed, but their execution was postponed for a term of years—up to twelve—on the plea of giving capital a chance to adjust itself. As a matter of fact, greed for immediate profits irrespective of ultimate results has taken possession of industrial Japan.

This individualistic force has been reinforced by what seems to me the most harmful force at work in Japan—impatient hurry to become a Great Power at once. The Japanese know very well that a modern Great Power requires developed industry and wealth. Consequently they have “drawn the great red-ink overdraft on the future.” Its statesmen have believed that the interests of the nation coincided with the get-rich-quick desires of individuals, and have not only not tried to regulate them but have encouraged them. The most enlightening answer received to the question asked by every foreign visitor as to the difference of political parties in Japan was that the party in power was the Mitsui party, while its rival was the Mitsubishi party. Japan has its “big six”—corporations which combine banking, shipping, mining, manufacturing, and continental exploitation in their various activities. Of the six, the Mitsuis and Mitsubishi are the richest and most powerful, the others being grouped about them. By direct intermarriage as well as in countless indirect ways, these big business interests are woven into the administration of the state. In fact, they on one side and the military

and naval clans on the other are the State. Perhaps the greatest enlightenment I received as to practical politics in Japan was upon being told that the big business interests did not as such interfere in the Parliamentary elections. They did not care particularly what individuals were elected, for they did business direct with the political over-lords. The story of the alliance of big business and politics in Japan would require a book—not a paragraph. Hence there is not much use in citing isolated illustrative facts. But certain items in their system of taxation may be taken as typical. A private individual pays a seven per cent income tax when his income reaches seven hundred and fifty dollars. A corporation pays only seven and a half per cent on an income of half a million. Chapters could not say more as to where control lies in Japan. The theory is that the private individual can do little to make Japan a strong world-power. Big concentrations of capital can really push Japan ahead in building up trade and industry for world competition. And newspapers which devote columns to general denunciation of the government rarely condescend to discuss the significance of such facts as this.

During the discussions by the Japanese newspapers of the League of Nations, they were wont to say that Japan represented the cause of labor, while the Western nations, especially Great Britain and the United States, represented capitalism. But there is no modern state in which capitalism has such unresisted and almost unquestioned power as in Japan today. The fear of the League of Nations as an agency of capitalistic exploitations was in fact a fear of one organization of capital by another—especially with reference to the development of Siberia and China.

It was a cynical Japanese—there aren't many—who told me that Japan's factory legislation was solely for the benefit of the Westerner. Being tired of telling curious visiting foreigners that Japan had no labor laws, they put some on the statute-book and suspended their execution for the most part. The former fact is advertised—and the latter concealed unless the visitor is unusually inquisitive. But the effect of this absence of regulation in conjunction with the rapid development of industry and trade during the past five years has been what every Westerner would have foretold. The labor crisis has arrived and it is unmitigated, acute. The allegedly more liberal Hara government at present in power has not authorized the formation of trade unions, but it has suspended the enforcement of the ban they are under. They now exist in a dim twilight zone, neither forbidden nor legalized. How numerous they are a visitor like myself has no way

of knowing. One young radical Japanese told me that Japan was honeycombed with them, even while they were illegal, that even farm hands were unionizing, and that the police no longer reported them because the police had themselves been infected with "dangerous ideas"—a technical term in Japan as well as in certain respectable circles in the United States.

In intellectual circles there is animated discussion of whether Japan must in its economic development pass through the stage of antagonism of capital and labor characteristic of Western development. There is an influential section, representing the old Confucianist oligarchy, which holds that it is not necessary. They conceive that the old feudal principle of master and man, of protection and dependence, can be carried over into the modern relation of employer and employee. They do not content themselves with making appeals to the former to treat their employees better, to assume paternalistic responsibilities. There are countless societies in existence, under the control of employers, for health insurance, sick funds, promoting the welfare of laborers, and so forth. This is known technically as the principle of "kindness." The liberals who have come most under the influence of Western ideas contend that the principle is only a belated feudal relic and is bound to fail. They hold that it is morally as well as economically necessary for the laborers to assert themselves; that they cannot develop unless they organize and win their rights for themselves, instead of accepting concessions from benevolent patrons. This is known as the principle of "rights." But the feudalists of the chosen, unique-nation type counter by saying that it is only the materialism of the West that has made the development of industry take the form of struggle for liberties and rights; that the superior moral standards of the Orient are capable of applying the principle of kindness and sympathy to the growth of industrial relations and thus escaping the class war which has disgraced Western civilization. The Bolsheviks, of course, come in usefully here as well as elsewhere.

But for the moment at least the case is going against the upholders of the doctrine of "kindness." The rice riots were the signal of the beginning of labor and class-consciousness. The high cost of living is even a more acute issue in Japan than elsewhere. Japan has to import a considerable part of its food supply, and rice is not, like wheat, a world staple. It is conceivable that the future destiny of Japan turns upon this fact, for rice costs twelve times what it cost thirty years ago, and over three times what it did at the beginning of the war.

Meantime there are all the usual consequences of change from the relative isolation of rural life to close contacts in cities and factories. On every side there are stories of increasing and active friction in shops and factories between foremen and laborers, and as I write there is a perfect epidemic of strikes. The rise in wages has in no sense kept pace with the increase in the cost of living; and the evidences of millionaires new-made from war profiteering abound on every hand. Japan is plunged suddenly and with practically no preparation, administrative or intellectual, into the most acute labor problem. Socialism is under the ban; a socialistic party is legally a criminal conspiracy and is treated as such. But according to all reports the interest in socialism is growing with remarkable rapidity.

In one of the private universities a teacher gave his class in advanced political economy a chance to vote as to whether they would not take up for study Commercial Expansion, Labor Movements, or Socialism. The vote was a hundred for the last topic, to three for the first. Considering the avidity of the Japanese for practical topics and the zeal for commercial expansion it is safe to say that before the war the figures would have been reversed. The younger generation of students is becoming infected with radical ideas. The Imperial University is often thought to be the home of intellectual conservatism. A group of its students are publishing a journal called Democracy. Some of its professors are the most active members of a society called The Dawn, which is openly carrying on propaganda by public lectures for democratic ideas. Magazines with titles like Reconstruction, The New Society, are born almost every month. During the time of the previous cabinet, when police supervision was more rigid than now, a judge was convicted of lese majeste, because in attacking the bureaucratic militarists he had said that by coming between the people and the Emperor they tarnished the glory of the Emperor. The suggestion that the Emperor could be tarnished was enough to send him to jail, but his standing and his influence were increased by the episode. A number of like cases could be cited. There have been of late many arrests for possession and circulation of "revolutionary" literature. There are even those who prophesy a political revolution on an economic basis in Japan within the next five years. But they seem to me too sanguine.

Serious as is the situation with labor, it is even more serious with the middle class. So far the industrial revolution in Japan does not run true to form. It is not creating a bourgeoisie, but rather undermining that which Japan used to possess. The

Marxian division into the proletariat and the millionaire is rapidly going on. The old hand points out to you as significant that the numerous autos seen on the streets of Tokyo are of the Rolls-Royce and Pierce-Arrow type; Fords are conspicuous by their absence. In the country districts, peasant proprietorship is on the wane; large and absentee landownership is on the increase. The average land holding is about the three acres; this hardly supports a family. Since it leaves no rice to sell, the high price of rice does not help the small farmer. Consequently concentration of land as well as of other forms of capital is rapidly proceeding.

Japan has had for some time an educated proletariat, which it has characteristically nicknamed the "European-clothes poor." So far as minor officials, police, clerks, and primary school teachers are concerned, this middle class has been the most staunch supporter of bureaucracy and militarism. But it recently tasted the bitterness of being a salaried class when the cost of living was leaping. Wages have increased; salaries hardly at all. The police begin to agitate, and the Government did something for them; their position was too strategic to take chances. The primary school teachers called meetings for discussion in Tokyo and Yokohama; the police, acting under governmental instructions, forbade and then broke up the meetings. A newspaper commenting on the situation asked what would be the effect upon pupils when teachers in school taught conventional ethics, while out of school the teachers went contrary to the ethics they taught? In other words, the burden of what is termed "ethics" in the primary schools is submission to authority, while out of school the teachers were guilty of going contrary to authority in agitating to force the authorities to give them a living wage. The middle class does not of course possess the weight in mass of the laboring class, but it is quite likely that, with its greater education, its weaning from the cause of autocracy to which it has been devoted will have the earlier political results.

The observer can follow the progress of the cause of democracy in Japan by certain outward signs. The first and in many ways the most superficial will be the extension of universal suffrage. The last Parliament passed a bill about doubling the electorate. It was a compromise measure that gave no satisfaction to either the conservatives or the radicals. Unless foreign relations monopolize attention, the struggle will be renewed in the next Parliament. The second sign, and a more significant one, will be a conflict, occasioned either through the extension of suffrage or some similar question, between the lower house and the upper. For the House of Peers

was deliberately invented to give the old oligarchy and the new plutocracy power to prevent extravagances in the popular direction on the part of the lower house. An even more serious sign will be the determined effort to make the ministers of war and navy real members of the Cabinet, instead of privileged appointees of the Army and Navy with independent and irresponsible jurisdiction. How far their independence goes came out in a way which would have been most embarrassing in any country except Japan in the closing days of the last Parliament. It was necessary to get the approval of the budget of expenditures of the various governmental departments. That of the War Department called for extra wages to one hundred and fifty thousand soldiers who had been on service in Siberia. Yet the Foreign Office had had a distinct understanding with other governments that only from seven to ten thousand men, a number proportionate to the army of the other Allies, would be sent. There was a temporary excitement, the House went into secret session, the money was voted, and a few days later there appeared in the newspapers a semi-official statement that the number in Siberia had not exceeded seventy thousand. No outsider, and not many insiders, will ever know what the other eighty thousand were paid for. But the meaning of an independent minister of war in a government that is said by propagandists in foreign countries to be constitutional is measured by the fact that he could act in such contravention to the direct pledge of the minister of foreign affairs. Numerous such cases appear, especially in connection with Chinese affairs; and it is of course impossible to tell how much is collusion with a chance to prove an alibi on the part of supposedly liberal ministers, and how much is due to the undoubted power of the Minister of War (in effect the General Staff) to act without the rest of the "Government's" knowing anything about it. Other convincing signs of the spread of democratic ideas will be a movement for responsibility of the ministry to the Parliament instead of to the Emperor—which means in effect to the Clemen who constitute Elder Statesmen, and for real legislative initiative on the part of the Parliament. For one has to be near the scene to learn that no important bills ever even receive consideration in the Parliament unless they have received a permit from the Privy Council—a secret and irresponsible body. The canceling of the power of the policy without judicial action or review, to suppress newspapers will be a most hopeful sign.

However, it is not likely that affairs will move in such a logical sequence as has been outlined. It is more likely that something will happen and a gen-

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eral change in the political structure take place all at once. Yet while in its effect, in its consequence, this happening will be a revolution, it is hard to imagine a happening in Japan such as we usually associate with the word "Revolution." There is some quality in the Japanese inscrutable to a foreigner which makes them at once the most rigid and the most pliable people on earth, the most self-satisfied and the most eager to learn. It is wholly conceivable that, with the development of democratic sentiment, a dramatic change may suddenly take place comparable to the transfer in the sixties of power from the old Tokugawa Shogunate to the Satsuma and Choshu clansmen, and the consequent centralized unification of Japan and the surrender of the policy of isolation. To the student of history it now looks very much as if Japan in the seventies and

eighties had been very much in flux, and as if with slight changes in the course of events Japan might then have become a genuine and not a simulated constitutional state. But unfortunately in the eighties Europe generally entered upon the imperialistic path, and in the later eighties Japan deliberately adopted from Germany a militarized state, a constitution which gave the form without the substance of a representative government, and a universal primary education calculated to produce what a young Japanese student of English called "obeyfulness," and a secondary and higher system aiming at specialized efficiency in the service of the state. The development of liberation was put in abeyance for thirty years.

JOHN DEWEY.

An Ancient Cynic

THERE IS a popular parlor-game known in this country as Gossip. It is a harmless little psychological diversion, and it is played approximately as follows: One of the company, usually chosen by lot, whispers a short sentence in his neighbor's ear, such as "All men are liars," or "A rolling stone gathers no moss." This sentence, or as much of it as is audible, is repeated by the person receiving it to the person sitting next to him, who in turn passes it on secretly to his neighbor. After going the whispered rounds of the assembled company, which is seated in a circle, the original remark reaches the ears of the first whisperer. He thereupon announces his own statement and its surprising metamorphosis, which usually has taken some such form as "A barking dog never bites" or "A fool and his money are soon parted"; there is a loud burst of laughter from everyone, a noisy scraping of chairs, and a hasty dash for the lemonade.

In some such way, only on a more magnificent scale, ancient history reaches our ears. We flatter ourselves that we know the secrets which the past has whispered to us, when as a matter of fact we are ignorant of most of its most public matters. When we realize, however, that in the parlor-game Gossip the players not only speak the same language but refrain from deliberately falsifying what they hear, and when we realize furthermore that their game usually occupies less than one hundred seconds, we are not astonished so much as shocked that another game, occupying two thousand years, conducted in three different languages, and played by a company of ecclesiastical demagogues, should end with even more amazing and divergent results.

For playing detective in the back parlor of the

Church, Morris Jastrow, Jr., has won, or must eventually win, the gratitude of every man who has a weakness for the truth. In the foreword to his book *A Gentle Cynic* (Lippincott, Philadelphia) he states his intention of doing unto the Book of Job and the Song of Songs as he has done unto the so-called Book of Ecclesiastes. If he fulfills this intention he will not have many friends left in the right wing of Christendom. But the left wing, at any rate, will flutter for him proudly. And all the heathen seekers after historic fact will, it is certain, welcome him into their fold and call him Brother. For Mr. Jastrow has not merely acted as dragoman between the ancient Hebrew and the modern Englishman; he has not merely given us a literal, unadorned translation of a work commonly—and wrongly—attributed to King Solomon; he has exhibited the whole twisted policy of Ecclesiastical buncombe which runs like a muddy stream through the green pastures of ancient literatures. He has given us, probably for the first time in 2200 years, the acid, unsweetened philosophy of Koholeth, who styled himself King over Israel in Jerusalem.

Some of the blame for the sweetening process which the sayings of this ancient cynic have undergone he lays, by implication, at the doors and the dictionaries of the Greek translators. At least Mr. Jastrow points out, with a finger never weary in well-doing, that the second book of the Pentateuch was called, in the Hebrew, *Shemoth*, meaning "Names," which the Greek pundits, in a free flight of the imagination, passed down to us as *Exodus*. Again, the book known to us as *Lamentations* was called, in the original Hebrew,

Echa, meaning "Alas!" which merely was the first word occurring in that book of tears. Still again, the book which we now know as Ecclesiastes was so baptized by these same pundits, with the excuse that an Ecclesia is an assembly, and that the root of the Hebrew name Koholeth is derived from a verb meaning "to assemble." Now, though Koholeth was undoubtedly a nom-de-plume, the man who had adopted it did so for definite reasons. The Book of Ecclesiastes is actually the Book of Koholeth. To bungle that fact in translation is not only to play fast and loose with an historical detail but also to throw doubt on the scientific scrupulousness of the rest of the work in a field of endeavor in which carelessness is as inexcusable as it is in a dynamite plant.

Most of his censure, however, Mr. Jastrow levels at the ancient Hebraic moralists themselves. In the ante-Christian era authorship in Israel was practically unheard of. Disciples and followers took the place of typewriters and printing-presses. Jesus Christ, as we know, never wrote down his philosophy of gentleness; it was collated and edited by his Apostles. Indeed, his forerunner by only a hundred-odd years, Jesus Ben Sira, was one of the first men to give the world a work to which he definitely affixed his name. The inevitable was the result—no man's creed was a stable thing. It was mouthed, and in the mouthing often marred, by the men who succeeded him. Even if he affixed it to parchment his words were emended to meet the varying customs of the day.

This is what happened to Koholeth. His cynicism was out of temper with his times. His doctrines were dangerous. He was a sans-culotte, and Jacobins were as unpopular then as now. Yet his writings had an undoubted vogue among the Zendiks of the age. He wielded an influence. People liked the taste of his teachings. They repeated after him, "Vanity, vanity, all is vanity"; and the phrase lay pleasantly on their tongues. What was to be done with this heretic who stirred up the people and put dynamite under the temples of their simple faiths? The answer will be found in the additions which were shrewdly added to Koholeth's original text, and which are found today in every Bible. In brief, the mysterious Koholeth was too powerful a personage to be suppressed altogether—so he was merely emended. One sixth of the Book of Ecclesiastes is comprised of these moral additions—ecclesiastical and political demulcents smeared over his work to soften its sting.

Two or three examples of such methods of ancient literary prophylaxis are all that may be included here. Koholeth, for example, says: "I

set out to experience frivolity and foolishness, though I knew that this, too, was chasing after wind." Whereupon a pious commentator, horrified at the idea that a man whom tradition had connected with King Solomon should deliberately set out to experience frivolity and foolishness, modified this cynical teaching by adding the clause "wisdom and knowledge"—and thus morally saved the day. Again, Koholeth remarks: "There is nothing better for a man than that he should eat and drink—a hedonistic idea which occasioned the hurried inclusion of the subsequently-penned moral maxim (I here follow the King James version and not Mr. Jastrow's) "For God giveth to a man that is good in His sight wisdom, and knowledge, and joy; but to the sinner he giveth travail." There are dozens of these instances, many even more startling in their philosophic anachronism. Mr. Jastrow goes after them all. He makes you sit up in your pew. He makes you suddenly aware that all games of gossip are not played in parlors, and that laughter and lemonade are not always appropriate dishes after the denouement.

But it is not as a judge so much as an honest workman finishing a hitherto botched job that he deserves unqualified praise. His explanation of how Ecclesiastes came to be included among the sacred writings of the East, his examination of Koholeth's philosophy, his demonstration that Koholeth's saying "Cast thy bread upon the face of the waters for after many days thou shalt find it" was less a maxim preaching generosity than a shrewd business slogan urging men into broader fields of trade, his tracing of the belief which attributed Koholeth's writings to King Solomon, his exposure of the fact that Koholeth believed no more in a future existence than did the Psalmist who declared that the dead can not praise God in Sheol—these exegetical additions to his original translations, with several dozens like them, make Mr. Jastrow's work a book of unparalleled interest in the realm of critico-historical literature.

It is Koholeth's text itself, however, that claims our first attention—and our last. Stripped of all ancient and modern moralizings, it gives us for the first time the bare bones of the old cynic—a man who once loved life and accused that love of stupidity; a man to whom, in the end, everything was vanity, and existence a foolish "chasing after wind."

WINTROP PARKHURST.

Bolshevism and the Vested Interests in America

II. ON THE CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH MAKE FOR A CHANGE

THE STATE OF INDUSTRY, in America and in the other advanced industrial countries, will impose certain exacting conditions on any movement that aims to displace the Vested Interests. These conditions lie in the nature of things; that is to say, in the nature of the existing industrial system; and until they are met in some passable fashion, this industrial system can not be taken over in any effectual or enduring manner. And it is plain that whatever is found to be true in these respects for America will also hold true in much the same degree for the other countries that are dominated by the mechanical industry and the system of absentee ownership.

It may also confidently be set down at the outset that such an impartial review of the evidence as is here aimed at will make it appear that there need be no present apprehension of the Vested Interests' being unseated by any popular uprising in America, even if the popular irritation should rise very appreciably above its present pitch, and even if certain advocates of "direct action," here and there, should be so ill-advised as to make some rash gesture of revolt. The only present danger is that a boisterous campaign of repression and inquisition on the part of the Guardians of the Vested Interests may stir up some transient flutter of seditious disturbance.

To this end, then, it will be necessary to recall, in a summary way, those main facts of the industrial system and of the present businesslike control of this system which come immediately into the case. By way of general premise it is to be noted that the established order of business rests on absentee ownership and is managed with an eye single to the largest obtainable net return in terms of price; that is to say, it is a system of businesslike management on a commercial footing. The underlying population is dependent on the working of this industrial system for its livelihood; and their material interest therefore centers in the output and distribution of consumable goods, not in an increasing volume of earnings for the absentee owners. Hence there is a division of interest between the business community, who do business for the absentee owners, and the underlying population, who work for a living; and in the nature of the case this division of interest between the absentee owners and the underlying population is growing wider and more evident from day to day;

which engenders a certain division of sentiment and a degree of mutual distrust. With it all the underlying population are still in a sufficiently differential frame of mind toward their absentee owners and are quite conscientiously delicate about any abatement of the free income which their owners come in for, according to the rules of the game as it is played.

The business concerns which so have the management of industry of this plan of absentee ownership are capitalized on their business capacity, not on their industrial capacity; that is to say, they are capitalized on their capacity to produce earnings, not on their capacity to produce goods. Their capitalization has, in effect, been calculated and fixed on the highest ordinary rate of earnings previously obtained; and on pain of insolvency their businesslike managers are now required to meet fixed income-charges on this capitalization. Therefore, as a proposition of safe and sane business management, prices have to be maintained or advanced.

From this businesslike requirement of meeting these fixed overhead charges on the capitalization there result certain customary lines of waste and obstruction, which are unavoidable so long as industry is managed by businesslike methods and for businesslike ends. These ordinary lines of waste and obstruction are necessarily (and blamelessly) included in the businesslike conduct of production. They are many and various in detail, but they may for convenience be classed under four heads: (a) Unemployment of material resources, equipment, and manpower, in whole or in part, deliberately or through ignorance; (b) Salesmanship (includes, e. g., needless multiplication of merchants and shops, wholesale and retail, newspaper advertising and bill-boards, sales-exhibits, sales-agents, fancy packages and labels, adulteration, multiplication of brands and proprietary articles); (c) Production (and sales-cost) of superfluities and spurious goods; (d) Systematic dislocation, sabotage and duplication, due in part to businesslike strategy, in part to businesslike ignorance of industrial requirements (includes, e. g., such things as cross-freights, monopolization of resources, withholding of facilities and information from business rivals whom it is thought wise to hinder or defeat). There is, of course, no blame, and no sense of blame or shame attaching to all this everyday waste

and confusion that goes to make up the workday total of businesslike management. All of it is a legitimate and necessary part of the established order of business enterprise, within the law and within the ethics of the trade.

Salesmanship is the most conspicuous, and perhaps the gravest, of these wasteful and industrially futile practices that are involved in the businesslike conduct of industry; it bulks large both in its immediate cost and in its meretricious consequences. It also is altogether legitimate and indispensable in any industrial business that deals with customers, in buying or selling; which comes near saying, in all business that has to do with the production or distribution of goods or services. Indeed, salesmanship is, in a way, the whole end and substance of business enterprise; and except so far as it is managed with a constant view to profitable bargains, the production of goods is not a business proposition. It is the elimination of profitable transactions of purchase and sale that is hoped for by any current movement looking to an overturn, and it is the same elimination of profitable bargaining that is feared, with a nerve-shattering fear, by the Guardians of the established order. Salesmanship is also the most indispensable and most meritorious of those qualities that go to make a safe and sane business man.

It is doubtless within the mark to say that, at an average, one-half the price paid for goods and services by consumers is to be set down to the account of salesmanship—that is, to sales-cost and to the net gains of salesmanship. But in many notable lines of merchandise the sales-cost will ordinarily foot up to some ten or twenty times the production-cost proper, and to not less than one hundred times the necessary cost of distribution. All this is not a matter for shame or distaste. In fact, just now more than ever, there is a clamorous and visibly growing insistence on the paramount merit and importance of salesmanship as the main stay of commerce and industry, and a strenuous demand for more extensive and more thorough training in salesmanship of a larger number of young men—at the public expense—to enable a shrewdly limited output of good to be sold at more profitable prices—at the public cost. So also there is a visibly increasing expenditure on all manner of advertising; and the spokesmen of this enterprise in conspicuous waste are “pointing with pride” to the fact that the American business community have already spent upward of \$600,000,000 on bill-boards alone within the past year, not to speak of much larger sums spent on newspapers and other printed matter for the same purpose—and the common man pays the cost.

At the same time advertising and manoeuvres of salesmanlike spell-binding appear to be the only resource to which the country's business men know how to turn for relief from that tangle of difficulties into which the outbreak of a businesslike peace has precipitated the commercialized world. Increased sales-cost is to remedy the evils of under-production. In this connection it may be worth while to recall, without heat or faultfinding, that all the costly publicity that goes into sales-costs is in the nature of prevarication, when it is not good broad mendacity; and quite unnecessarily so. And all the while the proportion of sales-costs to production-costs goes on increasing, and the cost of living grows continually greater for the underlying population, and business necessities continue to enlarge the necessary expenditure on ways and means of salesmanship.

It is reasonable to believe that this state of things, which has been coming on gradually for some time past, will in time come to be understood and appreciated by the underlying population, at least in some degree. And it is likewise reasonable to believe that so soon as the underlying population come to realize that all this wasteful traffic of salesmanship is using up their productive forces, with nothing better to show for it than an increased cost of living, they will be driven to make some move to abate the nuisance. And just so far as this state of things is now beginning to be understood, its logical outcome is a growing distrust of the business men and all their works and words. But the underlying population is still very credulous about anything that is said or done in the name of Business, and there need be no apprehension of a mutinous outbreak, just yet. But at the same time it is evident that any plan of management which could contrive to dispense with all this expenditure on salesmanship, or that could materially reduce sales-costs, would have that much of a free margin to go on, and therefore that much of an added chance of success; and so also it is evident that any other than a businesslike management could so contrive, inasmuch as sales-costs are incurred solely for purposes of business, not for purposes of industry; they are incurred for the sake of private gain, not for the sake of productive work.

But there is in fact no present promise of a breakdown of business, due to the continued increase of sales-costs; although sales-costs are bound to go on increasing so long as the country's industry continues to be managed on anything like the present plan. In fact, salesmanship is the chief factor in that ever-increasing cost of living, which is in its turn the chief ground of prosperity among

the business community and the chief source of perennial hardship and discontent among the underlying population. Still it is worth noting that the eventual elimination of salesmanship and sales-cost would lighten the burden of workday production for the underlying population by some fifty per cent. There is that much of a visible inducement to disallow that system of absentee ownership on which modern business enterprise rests; and—for what it may be worth—it is to be admitted that there is therefore that much of a drift in the existing state of things toward a revolutionary overturn looking to the unseating of the Vested Interests. But at the same time the elimination of salesmanship and all its voluminous apparatus and traffic would also cut down the capitalized income of the business community by something like one-half; and that contingency is not to be contemplated, not to say with equanimity, by the Guardians; and it is after all in the hands of these Guardians that the fortunes of the community rest. Such a move is a moral impossibility, just yet.

Closely related to the wasteful practices of salesmanship as commonly understood, if it should not rather be counted in as an extension of salesmanship, is that persistent unemployment of men, equipment, and material resources, by which the output of goods and services is kept down to the "requirements of the market," with a view to maintaining prices at a "reasonably profitable level." Such unemployment, deliberate and habitual, is one of the ordinary expedients employed in the businesslike management of industry. There is always more or less of it in ordinary times. "Reasonable earnings" could not be assured without it; because "what the traffic will bear" in the way of an output of goods is by no means the same as the productive capacity of the industrial system; still less is it the same as the total consumptive needs of the community; in fact, it does not visibly tend to coincide with either. It is more particularly in times of popular distress, such as the present year, when the current output of goods is not nearly sufficient to cover the consumptive needs of the community, that considerations of business strategy call for a wise unemployment of the country's productive forces. At the same time, such businesslike unemployment of equipment and man power is the most obvious cause of popular distress.

All this is well known to the Guardians of the Vested Interests, and their knowledge of it is, quite reasonably, a source of uneasiness to them. But they see no help for it; and indeed there is no help for it within the framework of "business as usual," since it is the essence of business as usual. So also,

the Guardians are aware that this businesslike sabotage on productive industry is a fruitful source of discontent and distrust among the underlying population who suffer the inconvenience of it all; and they are beset with the abiding fear that the underlying population may shortly be provoked into disallowing those Vested Interests for whose benefit this deliberate and habitual sabotage on production is carried on. It is felt that here again is a sufficient reason why the businesslike management of industry should be discontinued; which is the same as saying that here again is a visibly sufficient reason for such a revolutionary overturn as will close out the Old Order of absentee ownership and capitalized income. It is also evident that any plan which shall contrive to dispense with this deliberate and habitual unemployment of men and equipment will have that much more of a margin to go on, both in respect of practical efficiency and in respect of popular tolerance; and evidently, too, any other than a businesslike management of industry can so contrive, as a matter of course; inasmuch as any such unbusinesslike administration—as, e.g., the Soviet—will be relieved of the businesslike manager's blackest bug-bear, "a reasonably profitable level of prices."

But for all that, those shudderingly sanguine persons who are looking for a dissolution of the system of absentee ownership within two years' time are not counting on salesmanlike waste and businesslike sabotage to bring on the collapse, so much as they count on the item listed under (d) above—the systematic dislocation and all-round defeat of productive industry which is due in part to shrewd manoeuvres of businesslike strategy, in part to the habitual ignorance of business men touching the systematic requirements of the industrial system as a whole. The shrewd worldly wisdom of the businesslike managers, looking consistently to the main chance, works in harmoniously with their trained ignorance on matters of technology, to bring about what amounts to effectual team-work for the defeat of the country's industrial system as a going concern. Yet doubtless this sinister hope of a collapse within two years is too sanguine. Doubtless the underlying population can be counted on solidly to put up with what they are so well used to, just yet; more particularly so long as they are not in the habit of thinking about these things at all. Nor does it seem reasonable to believe that this all-pervading waste and confusion of industrial forces will of itself bring the business organization to a collapse within so short a time.

It is true, the industrial system is continually growing, in volume and complication; and with

every new extension of its scope and range, and with every added increment of technological practice that goes into effect, there comes a new and urgent opportunity for the business men in control to extend and speed up their strategy of mutual obstruction and defeat; it is all in the day's work. As the industrial system grows larger and more closely interwoven it offers continually larger and more enticing opportunities for such businesslike manoeuvres as will effectually derange the system at the same time that they bring the desired tactical defeat on some business rival; whereby the successful business strategist is enabled to get a little something for nothing at a constantly increasing cost to the community at large. With every increment of growth and maturity the country's industrial system becomes more delicately balanced, more intricately bound in a web of industrial give and take, more sensitive to far-reaching derangement by any local dislocation, more widely and instantly responsive to any failure of the due correlation at any point; and by the same move the captains of industry, to whose care the interests of absentee ownership are entrusted, are enabled, or rather they are driven by the necessities of competitive business, to plan their strategy of mutual defeat and derangement on larger and more intricate lines, with an ever wider reach and a more massive mobilization of forces. From which follows an ever increasing insecurity of work and output from day to day and an increased assurance of general loss and disability in the long run; incidentally coupled with increased hardship for the underlying population, which comes in all along as a subsidiary matter of course, unfortunate but unavoidable. It is this visibly growing failure of the present businesslike management to come up to the industrial necessities of the case; its unfitness to take anything like reasonable care of the needed correlation of industrial forces within the system; its continual working at cross purposes in the allocation of energy resources, materials, and man power—it is this fact, that any businesslike management of necessity runs at cross purposes with the larger technical realities of the industrial system, that chiefly goes to persuade apprehensive persons that the regime of business enterprise is fast approaching the limit of tolerance. So it is held by many that this existing system of absentee ownership must presently break down and precipitate the abdication of the Vested Interests, under conviction of total imbecility.

The theory on which these apprehensive persons proceed appears to be substantially sound, so far as it goes, but they reach an unguardedly desperate conclusion because they overlook one of the main

facts of the case. There is no reasonable exception to be taken to the statement that the country's industrial system is forever growing more extensive and more complex; that it is continually taking on more of the character of a close-knit, interwoven, systematic whole; a delicately balanced moving equilibrium of working parts, no one of which can do its work by itself at all, and none of which can do its share of the work well except in close correlation with all the rest. At the same time it is also true that, in the commercialized nature of things, the businesslike management of industry is forever playing fast and loose with this delicately balanced moving equilibrium of forces, on which the livelihood of the underlying population depends from day to day; more particularly is this true for that large-scale business enterprise that rests on absentee ownership and makes up the country's greater Vested Interests. But to all this it is to be added, as a corrective and a main factor in the case, that this system of mechanical industry is an extremely efficient contrivance for the production of goods and services, even when, as usual, the business men, for business reasons, will allow it to work only under a large handicap of unemployment and obstructive tactics. Hitherto the margin for error, that is to say for wasteful strategy and obstructive ignorance, has been very wide; so wide that it has saved the life of the Vested Interests; and it is accordingly by no means confidently to be believed that all these ample opportunities for swift and wide-reaching derangement will enable the strategy of business enterprise to bring on a disastrous collapse, just yet.

It is true, if the country's productive industry were competently organized as a systematic whole, and were then managed by competent technicians with an eye single to maximum production of goods and services; instead of, as now, being manhandled by ignorant business men with an eye single to maximum profits; the resulting output of goods and services would doubtless exceed the current output by several hundred per cent. But then, none of all that is necessary to save the established order of things. All that is required is a decent modicum of efficiency, very far short of the theoretical maximum production. In effect, the community is in the habit of getting along contentedly on something appreciably less than one-half the output which its industrial equipment would turn out if it were working uninterruptedly at full capacity; even when, as usual, something like one-half of the actual output is consumed in wasteful superfluities. The margin for waste and error is very wide, fortunately; and, in effect, a more patient and more inclusive survey of the facts in the case would suffice to show that the

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tenure of the Vested Interests is reasonably secure just yet; at least in so far as it turns on considerations of this nature.

There is, of course, the chance, and it is by no means a remote chance, that the rapidly increasing volume and complexity of the industrial system may presently bring the country's industry into such a ticklish state of unstable equilibrium that even a reasonable modicum of willful derangement can no longer be tolerated, even for the most urgent and most legitimate reasons of businesslike strategy and vested rights. In time, such an outcome is presumably due to be looked for. There is, indeed, no lack of evidence that the advanced industrial countries are approaching such a state of things, America among the rest. The margin for error and wasteful strategy is, in effect, being continually narrowed by the further advance of the industrial arts. With every further advance in the way of specialization and standardization, in point of kind, quantity, quality, and time, the tolerance of the system as a whole under any strategic maladjustment grows continually narrower.

How soon the limit of tolerance for willful derangement is due to be reached, would be a hazardous topic of speculation. There is now a fair prospect that the coming winter may throw some light on that dark question; but this is not saying that the end is in sight. What is here insisted on is that that sinister eventuality lies yet in the future, although it may be in the calculable future. So also it is well to keep in mind that even a fairly disastrous collapse of the existing system of businesslike management need by no means prove fatal to the Vested Interests, just yet; not so long as there is no competent organization ready to take their place and administer the country's industry on a more reasonable plan. It is necessarily a question of alternatives.

In all this argument that runs on perennial dislocation and cross purposes, it is assumed that the existing businesslike management of industry is of a competitive nature and necessarily moves on lines of competitive strategy. As a subsidiary premise it is, of course, also assumed that the captains of industry who have the direction of this competitive strategy are ordinarily sufficiently ill informed on technological matters to go wrong, industrially speaking, even with the most pacific and benevolent intentions. They are laymen in all that concerns the technical demands of industrial production. This latter, and minor, assumption therefore need not be argued; it is sufficiently notorious. On the other hand, the first assumption spoken of above, that current business enterprise is of a competitive

nature, is likely to be questioned by many who believe themselves to be familiar with the facts in the case. It is argued, by one and another, that the country's business concerns have entered into consolidations, coalitions, understandings and working arrangements among themselves—syndicates, trusts, pools, combinations, interlocking directorates, gentlemen's agreements, employers' unions—to such an extent as virtually to cover the field of that large-scale business that sets the pace and governs the movements of the rest; and that where combination takes effect in this way, competition ceases. So also it will be argued that where there has been no formal coalition of interests the business men in charge will still commonly act in collusion, with much the same result. The suggestion is also ready to hand that in so far as business like sabotage of this competitive order is still to be met with, it can all be corrected by such a further consolidation of interests as will do away with all occasion for competitive cross purposes within the industrial system.

It is not easy to see just how far that line of argument would lead; but to make it effective and to cover the case it would plainly have to result in so wide a coalition of interests and pooling of management as would, in effect, eliminate all occasion for businesslike management within the system, and leave the underlying population quite unreservedly at the disposal of the resulting coalition of interests—an outcome which is presumably not contemplated. And even so, the argument takes account of only one strand in that three-ply rope that goes to fashion the fatal noose. The remaining two are stout enough, and they have not been touched. It is true, economists and others who have canvassed this matter of competition have commonly given their attention to this one line of competition alone—between rival commercial interests—because this competition is conceived to be natural and normal and to serve the common good. But there remains (a) the competition between those business men who buy cheap and sell dear and the underlying population from and to whom they buy cheap and sell dear, and (b) the competition between the captains of industry and those absentee owners in whose name and with whose funds the captains do business. In the typical case, modern business enterprise takes the corporate form, is organized on credit, and therefore rests on absentee ownership; from which it follows that in all large-scale business the owners are not the same persons as the managers, nor does the interest of the manager commonly coincide with that of his absentee owners, particularly in the modern "big business."

So it follows that even a coalition of Vested

Interests which should be virtually all-inclusive, would still have to make up its account with "what the traffic will bear," that is to say what will bring the largest net income in terms of price; that is to say, the coalition would still be under the competitive necessity of buying cheap and selling dear, to the best of its ability and with the use of all the facilities which its dominant position in the market would give. The coalition, therefore, would still be under the necessity of shrewdly limiting the output of goods and services to such a rate and volume as will maintain or advance prices; and also to vary its manipulation of prices and supply from place to place and from time to time, to turn an honest penny; which leaves the case very near the point of beginning. But then, such a remedy for these infelicities of the competitive system will probably be admitted to be chimerical, without argument.

But what is more to the point is the fact, known even when it is not avowed, that the consolidations which have been effected hitherto have not eliminated competition, nor have they changed the character of the competitive strategy employed, although they have altered its scale and methods. What can be said is that the underlying corporations of the holding companies, *e.g.*, are no longer competitors among themselves on the ancient footing. But strategic dislocation and cross purposes continue to be the order of the day in the businesslike management of industry; and the volume of habitual unemployment, whether of equipment or of man power, continues undiminished and unashamed—which is after all a major count in the case.

It is well to recognize what the business men among themselves always recognize as a matter of course, that business is in the last analysis always carried on for the private advantage of the individual business men who carry it on. And these enterprising persons, being business men, will always be competitors for gain among themselves, however much and well they may combine for a common purpose as against the rest of the community. The end and aim of any gainful enterprise carried through in common is always the division of the joint gains, and in this division the joint participants always figure as competitors. The syndicates, coalitions, corporations, consolidations of interests, so entered into in the pursuit of gain are, in effect, in the nature of conspiracies between business men each seeking his own advantage at the cost of any whom it may concern. There is no ulterior solidarity of interests among the participants in such a joint enterprise.

By way of illustration, what is set forth in the

voluminous testimony taken in the Colton case, before the California courts, having to do with the affairs of the Southern Pacific and its subsidiaries, will show in what fashion the businesslike incentives of associated individuals may be expected to work out in the partition of benefits within a given coalition. And not only is there no abiding solidarity of interests between the several participants in such a joint enterprise, so far as regards the final division of the spoils, but it is also true that the business interest of the manager in charge of such a syndicate of absentee ownership will not coincide with the collective interest of the coalition as a going concern. As an illustrative instance may be cited the testimony of the great president of the two Great Northern railways, taken before a Congressional commission, wherein it is explained somewhat fully that for something like a quarter-century the two great roads under his management had never come in for reasonable earnings on their invested capital. And it is a matter of common notoriety, although it was charitably not brought out in the hearings of the commission, that during his incumbency as manager of the two great railway systems this enterprising railway president had by thrift and management increased his own private possessions from \$20 to something variously estimated at \$150,000,000 to \$200,000,000; while his two chief associates in this adventure had retired from the management on a similarly comfortable footing; so notably comfortable, indeed, as to have merited a couple of very decent peerages under the British crown.

In effect, there still is an open call for shrewd personal strategy at the cost of any whom it may concern; all the while that there is also a very appreciable measure of collision among the Vested Interests, at the cost of any whom it may concern. Business is still competitive business, competitive pursuit of private gain; as how should it not be? seeing that the incentive to all business is after all private gain at the cost of any whom it may concern.

By reason of doctrinal consistency and loyalty to tradition, the certified economists have habitually described business enterprise as a rational arrangement for administering the country's industrial system and assuring a full and equitable distribution of consumable goods to the consumers. There need be no quarrel with that view. But it is only fair to enter the reservation that, considered as an arrangement for administering the country's industrial system, business enterprise based on absentee ownership has the defects of its qualities; and these defects of this good old plan are now

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calling attention to themselves. Hitherto, and ever since the mechanical industry first came into the dominant place in this industrial system, the defects of this businesslike management of industry have continually been encroaching more and more on its qualities. It took its rise as a system of management by the owners of the industrial equipment, and it has in its riper years grown into a system of absentee ownership managed by quasi-responsible financial agents. Having begun as an industrial community which centered about an open market, it has matured into a community of Vested Interests whose vested right it is to keep up prices by a short supply in a closed market. There is no extravagance in saying that, by and large, this arrangement for controlling the production and distribution of goods and services through the agency of absentee ownership has now come to be, in the main, a blundering muddle of defects. For the purpose in hand, that is to say with a view to the probable chance of any revolutionary overturn, this may serve as a fair characterization of the regime of the Vested Interests; whose continued rule is now believed by their Guardians to be threatened by a popular uprising in the nature of Bolshevism.

Now, as to the country's industrial system which is manhandled on this businesslike plan; it is a comprehensive and balanced scheme of technological administration. Industry of this modern sort—mechanical, specialized, standardized, running to quantity production, drawn on a large scale—is highly productive; provided always that the necessary conditions of its working are met in some passable fashion. These necessary conditions of productive industry are of a well-defined technical character, and they are growing more and more exacting with every farther advance in the industrial arts. This mechanical industry draws always more and more largely and urgently on the natural sources of mechanical power, and it necessarily makes use of an ever increasingly wide and varied range of materials, drawn from all latitudes and all geographical regions, in spite of obstructive national frontiers and patriotic animosities; for the mechanical technology is impersonal and dispassionate, and its end is very simply to serve human needs, without fear or favor or respect of persons, prerogatives, or politics. It makes up an industrial system of an unexampled character—a mechanically balanced and interlocking system of work to be done, the prime requisite of whose working is a painstaking and intelligent co-ordination of the processes at work, and an equally painstaking allocation of mechanical power and materials. The foundation and driving force of it all is a

massive body by technological knowledge, of a highly impersonal and altogether unbusinesslike nature, running in close contact with the material exactly specialized, endlessly detailed, reaching out into all domains of empirical fact.

Such is the system of productive work which has grown out of the Industrial Revolution, and on the full and free run of which the material welfare of all the civilized peoples now depends from day to day. Any defect or hindrance in its technical administration, any intrusion of non-technical considerations, any failure or obstruction at any point, unavoidably results in a disproportionate set-back to the balanced whole and brings a disproportionate burden of privation on all these peoples whose sciences, on which it draws freely at every turn—as a going concern. There is no third party qualified to make a colorable bid, or able to make good the system.

It follows that those gifted, trained, and experienced technicians who now are in possession of the requisite technological information and experience are the first and instantly indispensable factor in the everyday work of carrying on the country's productive industry. They now constitute the General Staff of the industrial system, in fact; whatever law and custom may formally say in protest. The "captains of industry" may still vainly gloriously claim that distinction, and law and custom still countenances their claim; but the captains have no technological value, in fact.

Therefore any question of a revolutionary overturn, in America or in any other of the advanced industrial countries, resolves itself in practical fact into a question of what the guild of technicians will do. In effect it is a question whether the discretion and responsibility in the management of technicians, who speak for the industrial system productive industry has come within the sweep of the country's industry shall pass from the financiers, who speak for the Vested Interests, to the its pretensions if it should make a bid. So long as the vested rights of absentee ownership remain intact, the financial powers—that is to say the Vested Interests—will continue to dispose of the country's industrial forces for their own profit; and so soon, or so far, as these vested rights give way, the control of the people's material welfare will pass into the hands of the technicians. There is no third party.

The chances of anything like a Soviet in America, therefore, are the chances of a Soviet of technicians. And, to the due comfort of the Guardians of the Vested Interests and the good citizens who make up their background, it can be shown that

anything like a Soviet of Technicians is at the most a remote contingency in America. It is true, so long as no such change of base is made, what is confidently to be looked for is a regime of continued and increasing shame and confusion, hardship and dissension, unemployment and privation, waste and insecurity of person and property—such as the rule of the Vested Interests in business has already made increasingly familiar to all the civilized peoples. But the vested rights of absentee ownership are still embedded in the sentiments of the underlying population, and still continue to be the Palladium of the Republic; and the assertion is still quite safe that anything like a Soviet of Technicians is not a present menace to the Vested Interests in America.

By settled habit the technicians, the engineers and industrial experts, are a harmless and docile sort, well fed on the whole, and somewhat placidly content with the "full dinner-pail" which the lieutenants of the Vested Interests habitually allow them. It is true, they constitute the indispensable General Staff of that industrial system which feeds the Vested Interests; but, hitherto at least, they have had nothing to say in the planning and direction of this industrial system, except as employees in the pay of the financiers. They have, hitherto been quite unreflectingly content to work piecemeal, without much of an understanding among themselves, unreservedly doing job-work for the Vested Interests; and they have without much reflection lent themselves and their technical powers freely to the obstructive tactics of the captains of industry; all the while that the training which makes them technicians is but a specialized extension of that joint stock of technological knowledge that has been carried forward out of the past by the community at large.

But it remains true that they and their dear-bought knowledge of ways and means—dear-bought on the part of the underlying community—are the pillars of that house of industry in which the Vested Interests continue to live. Without their continued and unremitting supervision and direction the industrial system would cease to be a

working system at all; whereas it is not easy to see how the elimination of the existing business-like control could bring anything but relief and heightened efficiency to this working system. The technicians are indispensable to productive industry of this mechanical sort; the Vested Interests and their absentee owners are not. The technicians are indispensable to the Vested Interests and their absentee owners, as a working force without which there would be no industrial output to control or divide; whereas the Vested Interests and their absentee owners are of no material consequence to the technicians and their work, except as an extraneous interference and obstruction.

It follows that the material welfare of all the advanced industrial peoples rests in the hands of these technicians, if they will only see it that way, take counsel together, constitute themselves the self-directing General Staff of the country's industry, and dispense with the interference of the lieutenants of the absentee owners. Already they are strategically in a position to take the lead and impose their own terms of leadership, so soon as they, or a decisive number of them, shall reach a common understanding to that effect and agree on a plan of action.

But there is assuredly no present promise of the technicians' turning their insight and common sense to such a use. There need be no present apprehension. The technicians are a "safe and sane" lot, on the whole; and they are pretty well commercialized, particularly the older generation, who speak with authority and conviction, and to whom the younger generation of engineers defer, on the whole, with such a degree of filial piety as should go far to reassure all good citizens. And herein lies the present security of the Vested Interests, as well as the fatuity of any present alarm about Bolshevism and the like; for the whole-hearted co-operation of the technicians would be as indispensable to any effectual movement of overturn as their unwavering service in the employ of the Vested Interests in indispensable to the maintenance of the established order.

THORSTEIN VEBLEN.

Maiden and Poet

On a wharf, a girl with simple eyes construing a sea-gull
Wondering why he of the poignant realms, who stories the wind in his flight,
Should fly so caressingly here by the river's oily margins, in the factories' shaken smoke.

But never, oh never, in the trembling dream of her days,
Can she know why the bird of the poignant realms
Caresses alike her soul and the factories' soiling smoke.

BAYARD BOYSEN

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A FORTNIGHTLY

The Old Order and the New

TO WHAT EXTENT THE PSYCHOLOGY OF AN ENVIRONMENT and to what extent Marxian working class psychology determines a labor policy is well illustrated in the recent activity of the organized railroad workers of England and the United States. In both cases the railroad men are approximately one hundred per cent organized. In England exists a well-developed working class opinion which has become aggressive since the war and which—in contrast to the United States—is intensive, extensive, and conscious. On account of this opinion it was possible for the railroad workers to effect a complete tieup. And it was because the opinion was so well developed that the state capitulated. The government played its part in two short acts; the first was a heroic pretense of resistance, the second a boisterous surrender in the person of the British premier. The Brotherhoods will not call a national strike in the United States because they know that there is no organized opinion which would support them. Opinion in the United States is basically middle class. When the socialists of the country admit that fact they will know that the plan of the Railroad Brotherhoods for the administration of the roads is as revolutionary—or more so—in its significance as a national strike in any or all industries. The fact that the American working man has persistently considered himself as good as anyone else, as belonging to no class, is partly accountable for the emergence of a revolutionary program under the auspices of the most middle class labor group. This program of the railroad workers is acceptable to middle class American workmen because it is a recognition that the workers are as good as anybody else, are fit for status and responsibility. Instead of lining up with wage slaves in a strike for wages they line up under the Brotherhood proposition with industrial management. By a different road the British workers have been more or less consciously approaching this position. For many years the guild socialists of England have been urging the new union plan; in the past months it has made remarkable gains and the principle back of the plan is understood there as it is not yet understood among the mass of workers here. The year of grace which the government granted the British railroad men may be all the time British labor will need to transform the theory of labor control of industry into a policy of organization. It looks as though

a year of agitation of the Plumb Plan League might also convert the organized workers of this country. The common result in both countries is precipitated by industrial necessity. The guild socialists had the keenness to forecast the necessity and have done more than any other group in England to prepare the workers for a policy of industrial control. The syndicalists and the Industrial Workers of the World had also before the war aroused a certain recognition the world over of the principle of labor control. It was the war, however, in discrediting bureaucratic management that was the greater clarifier of industrial issues and is now pressing on the *conservative* labor forces a new vision and revolutionary drive.

KOLCHAK, THEY SAY, HAS NOT BEEN RECOGNIZED. Lenin, too, remains outside the pale. The shipment of food to Soviet Russia would involve us in something like a recognition of the Bolshevik Government, and must therefore be prohibited. The shipment of munitions to Kolchak proceeds, however—with what diplomatic implications the State Department may best testify. Recognition or no recognition—what does it matter? Shortly before Ambassador Morris' visit to Omsk, Paul S. Reinsch, United States Minister to China, transmitted to Washington certain American consular reports which pronounced Kolchak a reactionary and stated that he was much distrusted by the Siberian population. With some show of uncertainty the press reported that Ambassador Morris' preliminary reports in a general way substantiated those transmitted by Reinsch, and were unfavorable to the recognition of the Siberian dictator. About this time the Allied diplomats at Omsk were addressed to the following effect by Kolchak:

In an hour of trial the Admiral took upon himself the burden of supreme power. He did this with the approval and advice of the Allies, who promised unlimited support in the struggle against the Bolshevik Government. Unfortunately, the period which has elapsed since then has demonstrated the assistance furnished by the Allies to have been inadequate, to say the least, compared with the scale required for the success of the struggle . . . If this lingering and hesitating attitude toward the Government and its activity should continue, the Supreme Ruler will hold that he has no right to bear the heavy responsibility for the outcome and consequences of the struggle which is to decide the fate of Russia. . . .

The effect of these words was marvelous, if we

are to believe the journal already quoted, for:

The representatives of the United States and Japan, after communicating with their Governments, deemed the declarations of the Supreme Ruler to be quite right and meriting full satisfaction. . . . The Allied powers expressed their readiness immediately to increase the volume of all necessary supplies for the army and for the rear to the extent indicated in the Government plan. . . .

Accurate or not, the story is interesting. Certainly Ambassador Morris reversed his original position and recommended recognition and economic aid for Kolchak. Certainly, too, the "necessary supplies" have been dispatched regularly from Pacific ports to the reactionary forces that have become our special charge. It has remained for the direct actionists of the Pacific coast to make the first effective effort to stop the murderous business that has reduced our liberals to wet-eyed impotence. Two methods of breaking the blockade suggest themselves. The United States Government may buy the war material, handle it with military labor, and float it in army transports; so far as is known, this procedure has not yet been attempted. Or the munitions trade may be left in private hands, and military labor and military bottoms may be used to move the goods. Secretary Baker certainly recognizes the possibilities of this type of indirect action, for it is reported that he has recommended that a bill be introduced into Congress authorizing the War Department to carry commercial cargoes on army transports. But even if the bill is passed it is possible that shipments of munitions may be tied up by a refusal of the railroad workers to move the material from the factories to the ports. And the Administration will hardly dare to propose the militarization of the railways, even in Kolchak's cause.

IT IS NO PECULIARITY of the steel strike that it lends itself to description in terms of the battlefield. What is alarming in the present situation is the tendency of the government to single out the strikers as the enemy. That tendency unfortunately gives support to all the syndicalist doctrines which Mr. W. Z. Foster affected to repudiate before the Senate Committee. It is not enough that milltown officials should preserve the kind of law and order favorable to the steel corporations' view of the strike, by prohibiting public meetings and recklessly breaking into private ones, and thus creating a spurious identity between public and private interests. Nor is it enough that the Pennsylvania State Constabulary should deliberately provoke bloodshed on the strictly Prussic ground that peaceable public consultations are given inherently to disorder. In order to prove conclusively to the strikers the impartiality of the Federal Government and the lofty neutrality of the state, the Department of Justice arrived on the scene at an early stage and put into operation the machinery whereby

the commonplaces of sociology and politics, in the mouth of a foreign leader, become punishable as sedition and incitement to riot. On top of the gratuitous Federal activity in the steel centers, came the announcement from Washington of a new policy of employing the military arm: a War Department order that places the commandants of Federal army districts at the immediate call of state governors, without having the request countersigned at Washington. In connection with race rioting such a move would seem sufficiently innocent, although this new association of military and civil authority in a strictly local situation is sufficiently a departure from the American tradition to tempt the historian to inquire whether every Waterloo brings a Peterloo inevitably in its wake. But the use of the Federal troops in the Gary district under the same terms that permitted their employment in Omaha is an invidious reflection against the working population. As indicative of the animus of the Federal Government this would be a grave enough indictment of the new method of dealing with "disorder." But this is not all. The direct action of Federal troops divorces the power of the Federal Government from the responsibility of exercising that power prudently: the reckless institution of martial law and military infringements of constitutional guarantees now rest solely in the discretion of local authorities whose infirmity in keeping within constitutional bounds is already notorious. Is there anything to differentiate democratic twentieth century America's way of dealing with industrial disputes from that of oligarchic nineteenth century England? Is Wood an improvement on Wellington? Is public authority in America disinterested and enlightened and humane and above all—neutral? The worker who began the strike as a disciple of Herbert Spencer in the belief that the state was merely a nuisance might well, in the light of these provocations, come out of it as a follower of Sorel in the conviction that the state was an active enemy. This is the deplorable upshot of the steel strike. In comparison with it the industrial results are insignificant.

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Communications

THE BELGIAN-DUTCH QUARREL

SIR: The publication of the fake dispatch about a Belgian-Dutch rupture has given occasion for all sorts of untrue and insulting comment on the part Holland has played during the war and since the armistice and especially in the course of her present negotiations with Belgium. As a matter of fact, I find upon my return in this country that no European neutral had received such shabby and unfair treatment in the American press as Holland. Every morning, one can find one or two unjust "digs" at the Hague Government, coupled with silly charges that the Dutch people are "pro-German" and as some witty writer put it the other day "in the pay of Potsdam." It is difficult to discover why such indignities should have been piled on the Dutch, while the other neutrals of Europe, some of whom maintained a most questionable attitude throughout the war, are being treated with every kid-gloved courtesy.

The present negotiations which are being conducted under the watchful regard of the Big (are they really so big?) Five (are there really five?) with the object of reshuffling the treaties of 1839 can be considered as a case in point. Little is known outside Belgium and Holland of these treaties of 1839, little is known in America regarding the Belgian claims and the Dutch attitude, and yet everybody considers that Belgium must be in the right, and Holland in the wrong, without further ado. The matter, roughly, is one in which both parties could reach a satisfactory solution, were it not for the activities of a clique of imperialists, active both in Holland and Belgium, who cannot be content, so they say, with arbitration and insist on wanting "the whole hog, or none."

What does Belgium want of Holland? Simply the control over the mouth of the Scheldt, and a frontier rectification along the Meuse. I purposely say "Belgium" and not the Belgian extremists, who hope not only that Belgium will rule the waves of both rivers, but that she will annex vast portions of Holland, where staunch and patriotic Hollanders live in the hope of dying as Hollanders too. It is quite true—and nobody even in Holland denies it—that the treaties of 1839 should be remodelled, especially as they were based on the understanding that Belgium should remain "perpetually neutral." The neutrality of Belgium is dead. Therefore the treaties which found their origin and their *raison d'être* in this neutrality must perforce be adapted to the present novel conditions. Under the former treaties, Holland was granted a sort of right of police over the lower Scheldt; the Belgians now claim that Antwerp, their only large harbor, was thereby placed under a serious physical disadvantage. But is this quite

true? Had not Antwerp, even under that "serious physical disadvantage," become before the war one of the most important harbors of Europe? Had it not forestalled Rotterdam and Bremen and Marseilles? How could that have been possible if the Dutch had really misused their rights over the lower Scheldt with a selfish view of harming Antwerp to help Rotterdam, their new leading harbor? I lived many years in Belgium before the war and never heard any complaint regarding the manner in which the Dutch exercised their sovereignty over the mouth of the Scheldt. These complaints became loud only after the armistice. Why? Simply because it would be easy to persuade the Big Five to authorize the annexation by Belgium of the portion of Zeelandish Flanders comprised between the Belgian-Dutch frontier and the lower Scheldt if a case could be made out against the Dutch for misusing their privileges over the mouth of that great river and if it could be proven that Belgium had suffered greatly at the hands of a greedy, selfish, and inconsiderate neighbor.

Of course one of these charges against Holland is a by-product of the war itself. Belgium accuses Holland of having kept the Scheldt closed ever since the war began, thereby making it impossible for the Allies to relieve Antwerp. It is quite true that Holland did that, and truer still that she had to do it, and that this attitude was incumbent upon her as a consequence of her neutrality. Had Holland's closing of the Scheldt been contrary to the stipulations of existing treaties or to international law nobody doubts that the Allies would have found some means of forcing her into another attitude. Holland, in acting as she did, simply did her duty as a neutral power. And the fulfilment of that duty, curiously enough, may have handicapped the Belgians during the siege of Antwerp (though every military expert will tell you that it would have been impossible for the British fleet steaming up to Antwerp to prevent the capture of the city), but it handicapped the Germans to a far greater degree, for with the Scheldt closed by neutral Holland, Antwerp could not be made a submarine base.

With regard to the Meuse, the situation is different. The configuration of the Belgian-Dutch frontier through Limburg is ill-adapted to Belgium's military defence. But the Meuse area in dispute includes the city of Maastricht, which is Dutch and wants to remain Dutch, and it also includes Holland's only coal mines, without which Holland cannot maintain an independent industrial existence. It is very kind of the Belgians to offer Holland in exchange of the Maastricht enclave a slice of Germany, which Holland does not want. The statesmen at The Hague contend that if Europe is going to rebuild on the basis of self-determination for all nationalities, the annexation of Zeelandish Flanders and of portions of

Dutch Limburg by Belgium on the plea of commercial and military necessity would be an act of gross injustice and of unquestioned political immorality. Therefore, Holland has opposed a absolute non possumus to any proposal for the annexation of Dutch territory, with or without "compensations."

Holland is only too anxious to "speak" with Belgium in a cordial and open way, and there should be many responsible statesmen in Belgium who share Holland's moderate and fair views. But it seems that for some time moderation, which used to be a Belgian quality, had been undiscoverable in Brussels, as a consequence of Belgium's share in a glorious victory. This is not surprising, but it is regrettable. If moderation can not induce some of the Belgian annexationists to discuss the whole problem with the Dutch, the remembrance of the exceptional kindness and generosity shown to the Belgians who took refuge in Holland during the war should certainly help in that direction. Holland in that respect certainly did wonders, in spite of the great and painful hardships she herself suffered through the double blockade by England and Germany. In spite of that precarious position "between the hammer and the anvil," Holland could all other neutrals in helpfulness and warm-hearted generosity. It is now up to the Belgians to deal with Holland with the greatest fairness, to discuss with her the grave European problems that confront both nations in a spirit of wisdom, moderation, and honesty, if not actually of thankfulness. Holland is ready for that discussion, on condition that Belgium does not demand her to cut her throat to please her neighbors. Belgium has fought magnificently for the highest principles that rule international relationship between civilized peoples. It is up to her to live up to these principles, among which self-determination is the first and foremost, and to find (with the help and even, if need be, with the cordial pressure of the great powers) a solution by which Belgium and Holland can live at peace without the rights of one Dutch citizen having been violated, and without one frontier milestone having been removed.

RENE FEIBELMAN.

New York City.

AFTER US THE DELUGE

SIR: Can you not forget the Peace Treaty, Wilson, and other inconsequential matters for a day and give a little attention to the more important matter of the weather. We had forty-three rainy days last month and more than thirty Marblehead washerwomen committed suicide. If this thing keeps on every woman will have to do her own washing and the whole order of creation will thereby be set at naught.

WALTER C. HUNTER.

Marblehead, Mass.

Notes on New Books

DEADHAM HARD. By Lucas Malet. 503 pages. Dodd, Mead.

In this novel, mid-Victorian not only in period but in characters and in handling of materials, the reader follows Damaris Verity through three years of her life. The milestones in her development from an over imaginative child of eighteen to a disillusioned woman of twenty-one are dwelt on in detail and at length. The author educates Damaris by introducing her abruptly to her father's Byronic past in the shape of a half-brother, whom she learns to love dearly; by bringing into her life, for a social mentor, an old flame of her father's; by the death of her father and finally by a love affair with his old friend. Out of all this Damaris emerges, still a mid-Victorian heroine and one not likely to interest and convince readers much beyond her own age. She has too little of the brave quality demanded by the public of today. Indeed, in many respects, there seems little difference between the Damaris of eighteen who faints and develops a high fever when Darcy Faircloth announces that he is her brother and the Damaris of twenty-one who gives way to fits of jealousy and anger and who cannot face death. When her dying father sends for her and says, "My affairs are in order," Damaris shrinks piteously and expostulates, "Oh! But must we, are we obliged to speak of those things? They grate on me—they are ugly. They hurt." As in Sir Richard Calmady there seems to be a straining after unpleasant incident. In this connection, as in many others, the author states her own philosophy:

Most of us are so constituted that at a certain pass, pleasure—of a sort—is to be derived from witnessing the anguish of a fellow creature.

And when Damaris lies overcome by grief, the lines of her gracious body outlined by the embroidered linen quilt, her father, contemplating her grief, "found indeed a strangely vital, if somewhat cruel satisfaction in looking on it."

The construction, too, has a tendency to lead down blind alleys. Tom Verity, who enters the second chapter with all the attendant circumstance of a hero, holds the scene for fifty pages and then drops out. Once thereafter a letter from him causes Damaris to blush, and he is among those present at a funeral in the last chapter, but that is all. Darcy Faircloth, the brother, sails away to Japan. Still there are vivid touches, the ghostly atmosphere of the old house is well produced and a genuine feeling for nature runs through the book. Much care has gone to the portrayal of character, so that the men and women run true to Victorian type and form in their humorless blending of shocked propriety with an easy acceptance of the sowing and reaping of the wild-oat crop.

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THE OLD MADHOUSE. By William De Morgan. 565 pages. Holt. *

This is the last addition which the confirmed De Morganite can ever make to the row of fat blue-and-gold volumes on his shelves. This fact alone would secure respectful treatment for *The Old Madhouse*, even if it were inferior to its predecessors. But it isn't. Except for the first flow of his genius in *Joseph Vance*, De Morgan never did better work than this. It reveals no new characteristics, but the old ones are present in undiminished force. It adds, in the person of Nancy Fraser, one more to that group of young women—second in English literature only to Jane Austen's—who are neither brilliant prodigies like Meredith's, nor convention-ignoring goddesses like Hewlett's, but ordinary, lovable human girls. Mrs. Carteret must rank with Mrs. Nightingale as her author's most sympathetic portrayal of a middle-aged mother; Lucy Snaith is another Delilah like Judith Arkroyd, drawn with remorseless insight.

The story, not quite complete when its author died, was finished from his notes by Mrs. De Morgan. Her postscript on her husband's method of composition is worth noting:

When my husband started on one of his novels, he did so without making any definite plot. He created his characters and then waited for them to act and evolve their own plot. In this way the puppets in the show became real living personalities to him, and he waited, as he expressed it, "to see what they would do next."

This suggests a doubt. Is there not a possibility that some contemporary novelists, with their emphasis on structure, are going wrong—are tending to produce something analogous to the "well-built" plays of Eugene Scribe? *The Old Madhouse*, as a matter of fact, has a more closely knit plot than most of De Morgan's novels, but no one is going to remember it, any more than one remembers the plot—if there is any—of *Vanity Fair*. But when we contrast the extraordinary vitality of the people created by De Morgan and the great Victorians with the carefully-painted puppets who so neatly perform the actions required of them by the plot of the well-built modern novel, we cannot escape at least a momentary suspicion that De Morgan, in placing character first, has chosen the better part.

A CHILDHOOD IN BRITTANY EIGHTY YEARS AGO. By Anne Douglas Sedgwick. 224 pages. Century.

In this "little sheaf of childish memories" the author has set down the recollections of an old French friend. There is none of the subtlety of *Tante* or *The Encounter* here; only a charming simplicity with the exquisite clearness of a silhouette. Not the least of its charm is the personality of the little girl of eighty years ago. One sees in her both the beautiful, high-spirited mother and her gay, imperturbable father. Sophie is sweet and wilful, dainty and democratic. She enjoys the so-

ciety—and the black bread and butter—of old Kersiflan, the lodge keeper, quite as much as she likes being the pet of the great Marquis de L., who plays his flute for her and teaches her to enter a room gracefully. Her memories of the people of her childhood are very vivid, and her character drawing is delicate and sure. Just as present in her mind are the high-heeled slippers of *Tante Rose*, the border of golden oak leaves on Grandfather de Rosval's cloak and the orange velvet in which *bonne maman* looked like an old fairy. She recalls with zest the delicious Breton crepes made of malaga-flavored batter and the roasted sheep's tails on silver spits. No doubt her memory of the grass, which her cousin Jules insisted she learn to eat to be ready in case of famine, is even more vivid. The keen, restrained humor of the telling is quite Gallic. It is not one story but many. It is like an old brocade with the sun shining suddenly and warmly upon it, bringing out the many-colored silk threads and the intricate pattern woven into an exquisite whole. Paul de Leslie's illustrations, delicate of line and with few and salient details, are in sympathy with the text.

THE HEART'S DOMAIN. By Georges Duhamel. Translated by Eleanor Stimson Brooke. 199 pages. Century.

THE NEW BOOK OF MARTYRS. By Georges Duhamel. Translated by Florence Simmons. 221 pages. Doran.

COMPAGNONS. By Georges Duhamel. 125 pages. Nouvelle Revue Française, Paris.

Readers of Bertrand Russell may cite Georges Duhamel as a conspicuous example of the recovery of the human soul in the face of a staggering universe. Living four years in a world of intensified malignity, he returns, not with the sap of his soul dried up, but with it flowing richer and freer than ever. He has recoiled with a complete denial from an industrial and scientific civilization to take refuge in the interior life, in the cultivation of the soul. In the midst of nauseating wounds he has proclaimed anew the will-to-happiness. "Happiness is not only the aim, the reason of life: it is its province, its expression, its essence. It is life itself. Happiness, you are the aim and reason for my existence. I know that even in my tears." True riches, he decided while his ears were still assaulted by cannon-roars, are the quiet virtues of the soul. And he develops at length the last sentence of his previous book, *Civilization*—that civilization must be found in the heart of man. Mankind has heard this message many times before, but the force, the fervor, the contagious conviction with which Duhamel utters it has not been exemplified for a long time. *The New Book of Martyrs*, taken as a whole, is even more convincing than the earlier books, but it still falls somewhat short of the possibilities of the subject. To do full justice to so tremendous a

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sacrifice is beyond the art of man, but M. Duhamel fails to equal even the dubious adequacy of André Fribourg's *Croire*. Still, there is a simple, poignant realism in this collection of sketches of the panorama of pain and fortitude witnessed by a French military surgeon that goes far to compensate for the irritating style in which it is written. M. Duhamel knows the tortured life he portrays, and only those who have gazed upon the same suffering can realize how terribly real it is, this "learning to live in Death's company." He has trodden those gloomy corridors carpeted with pain, between the long rows of cots laden with despair; and the stories he tells of the sufferers, these martyrs of a new age, are not mere fictions: they are genuine, heartrending plagues de vie, of a life terrible to contemplate, told with a rare simplicity and lighted by a splendid sympathy. They are a new Ave, Caesar, morituri te salutant. Nietzsche says that suffering ennobles: and surely it is no common nobility to which their martyrdom has raised these men. It is a spiritual exaltation that fills their souls and transcends the sordidity and the commonplaces of their lives, and imparts to them a higher vision which they feel within them even if they cannot understand it. M. Duhamel has seen these things in the dying eyes of his countrymen, and he passes them on to us in *The New Book of Martyrs*.

In contrast to the constructive but gloomy irony of *Civilization* and the rather patent pathos of *La Vie des Martyrs*, the simplicity and sympathy with which his little volume of poems, *Compagnons*, is written are a delightful change. In it he is purely the poet of the people, a sort of French Whitman, free from all the barbarity of the American poet, and imbued with the delicate touch of his late comrade in arms, Francois Coppee. For that very reason, however, Duhamel is likely to be lost to the American public. Inspired as he is with the doctrines of Whitman, he lacks the latter's verbose strength to hammer his way into recognition; his national characteristic exhibits itself too profoundly in a sort of maladive super-sympathy with his fellowmen for his voice to be heard long above the noise and clatter of American industry. Yet his poetry is distinctly the poetry of the laboring man, the poetry of human sympathy; in his own words it is the poetry of "cordiality." It is not the form nor the nuance that Duhamel seeks, it is the naked truth, and that truth, itself, has no significance for him unless it be universal. His book, *Compagnons*, might be considered as the logical reaction against the estrangement which has developed between modern man and his fellows, as a direct protest against the creation of a human automaton which performs its social functions without any special regard for the other members of its society. Duhamel attains his purpose through a medium purged of all superfluity, a medium of verse reduced to the fundamentals of grace and simplicity. In the poet-

ry of *Compagnons* suggestion and symbolism are everything, the words themselves have little or no direct connotation. Yet Duhamel is no doctrinaire, he belongs to no fixed school of thought. He is merely a poet of the awakened conscience, preaching the doctrines of a regenerate Christianity.

JOHN STUYVESANT AND OTHERS. By Alvin Johnson. 252 pages. Harcourt, Brace and Howe.

This is a group of short stories, shorter stories, and sketches. The longest and most fully developed is the first, John Stuyvesant Ancestor. In this, as in the others, the emphasis is heaviest on character, with a social problem lurking in the background. John Stuyvesant is a most lovable baby, rather too summarily dismissed when the plot no longer needs him. The irritable, doggedly well-doing school principal who resents any intrusion upon his work finds his very foundations overturned at last when his intelligent wife refuses to fit any longer into his preconceived plan of things. Their "circle" with its footless discussions conjures up rare pictures—Miss Platt, for instance, going through the eugenics report "like a bandsaw ripping through a log, knots and all."

The plot is slight. Indeed throughout the book, plot is a negligible factor. Some of the sketches dispense with it altogether, substituting a point instead, and driving it home with well-placed blows. The woman question is the theme of a bit of keen satire in *Suh-Ho in Praise of Footbinding*. The same problem is touched upon sympathetically in several sketches. Its eternal obstacles come in for a good-natured buffeting in *Phyllis the Feminist* and *Ivan the Terrible*. *Carnegied* and *The Molting of Alcibiades* reveal another phase of natural law—the impossibility of being original about growing old. *Alcibiades'* revolt over having all his actions predetermined and labeled as the ones to be expected in a man past his prime is pathetic.

Mr. Johnson has evidently been reading humanity for a long time and at close range. He has, besides, a trained intuition, the gift of swift, illuminating definition and description. There is no waste diction, no straining after points. He introduces us to a number of people, most of them at odds with the world as they find it, and all of them dealt with from the standpoint of the social reformer, who pigeonholes people as so many social problems. Thus we meet the feminist, the liberal, the mob, the professor, the inventor, and even "the" poor Indian. We are reminded of the *Bab Ballad*:

Come, step it, thirty-eight,
And thirty-eight stepped out.

Still the people of the stories are not merely stock samples of the human race. They possess individuality in spite of their habit of falling readily into classes. Like his Gustav Kieselbacher, Mr. Johnson "sees things double, science and life."

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The Truth about China and Japan, by B. L. Putnam Weale (248 pages; Dodd, Mead), throws pro-Chinese reinforcements into the battle of words that rages around Shantung. The diplomatic background of today's discussion is described with some care, and the account is supplemented with reprints of the Lansing-Ishii notes and numerous Sino-Japanese state papers of recent date. Review later.

The Awakening of Asia, by H. M. Hyndman (280 pages; Boni & Liveright), was written before the British post-war seizures in Asia and Africa marked a new and monstrous development of imperialism. And yet the author warns Europe against the coming of the great revenge, when the tide that threatened for a thousand years to sweep European civilization into the Atlantic will set westward again. Review later.

The New Map of Asia, by Herbert Adams Gibbons (571 pages; Century), asks—and answers—the question: Can a man believe in "the white man's burden"—with all that this phrase implies—and at the same time condemn what we fought Germany to destroy? Review later.

Nationalities in Hungary, by André de Hevesy (247 pages; T. Fisher Unwin, London), draws a not altogether sound analogy between the Entente's partition of Hungary and the reconstruction of Poland by these same powers. The author believes that the solution of the Hungarian problem lies not in enforced integration or in wholesale partition, but in the formation of a United States of the Danube. Textually and mechanically the volume bears the marks of a propagandist publication.

The Powers and Aims of Western Democracy, by William Milligan Sloane (489 pages; Scribner), is a survey of political facts and theories in which the scholarship of Gibbon is used to justify prejudices of Grubb Street. Review later.

Municipal Government, by Frank J. Goodnow and Frank G. Bates (453 pages; Century), is the second edition of a book that has held its own in its field for a whole decade. In spite of revision in the chapters dealing with finance, home rule, public utilities, and so forth Municipal Government is not up to date in political theory, and it now stands in need of a more searching criticism than it was possible to give the first edition. Review later.

The New Spirit in Industry, by F. Ernest Johnson (95 pages; Association Press), is indicative of the new spirit in the churches. It is a breathless, rapid-fire guide to labor and industrial problems—an abridged Baedeker to the new world. In considering Professor Albion Small's plea for a commission to study industrial disputes the author takes for granted that the commission would be composed of men "whose chief qualification is not economic training or industrial expertness, but so to say, ethical expertness." A proposal which seems to indicate that the Church is innocent enough of scientific method to seek to blow down the walls of capitalism with a trumpet and build Jerusalem out of a prayer.

Bolshevism and Social Revolt, by Daniel Dorchester (124 pages; Abingdon Press), supplies an ecclesiastical diadem for the new Divine Right of Kings. "Private property," says the author, "has a divine sanction and is one of the oldest of human institutions."

Memoirs of the Russian Revolution, by George V. Lomonosoff (87 pages; Rand School), collects notes set down during the revolution of March 1917, when the author, by reason of his connection with the Revolutionary forces, had ample opportunity to observe the earliest activities of the Provisional Government.

Treitschke's History of Germany in the Nineteenth Century, Volume VI, translated by Eden and Cedar Paul (670 pages; McBride), roves discursively over the period of 1830 to 1845, dealing principally with German home policy in its political aspects. Review later.

The Crime, by the author of *I Accuse* (Vols. III and IV, 713 pages; Doran). The first two volumes of this work, previously published, dealt with Germany's war responsibility. The new volume, on War Aims, concerns itself chiefly with the utterances of Chancellor von Bethmann-Hollweg, and brings the discussion down to the end of September 1917. Volume IV deals with the German propagandist use of Belgian state papers captured in Brussels.

What the War Teaches about Education, by Ernest Carroll Moore (334 pages; Macmillan), makes the discovery that only education can make democracy safe for the world. One is surprised at the admission that a victory for the Entente was not in itself sufficient for the accomplishment of this high aim. But this surprise vanishes when it is revealed that the ideals set forth by the President in his message to the members of the Students Army Training Corps are to be those of America's after-the-war kultur. Review later.

The Life and Letters of James Monroe Taylor: The Biography of an Educator, by Elizabeth Hazelton Haight (391 pages; Dutton), increases the documentation of the past generation by revealing the more obvious intimacies of one who was President of Vassar College, 1886—1914.

From Midshipman to Rear-Admiral, by Rear-Admiral Bradley A. Fiske (693 pages; Century), recounts the experiences of an official career covering the half-century during which "navies have increased more than a hundredfold . . . in the amount of destructive power they can exert." Admiral Fiske admits that he contributed a great deal to this development—contributed much more than Secretary Daniels, whose inadequacies the Admiral discusses very frankly.

Theodore Roosevelt: An Intimate Biography, by William Roscoe Thayer (474 pages; Houghton Mifflin), offers little to justify its sub-title but the bare fact of acquaintance. It adds to that stream of Rooseveltiana which never overflows the conventional banks of his personality. Review later.

Bill Sewall's Story of T. R., by William Wingate Sewall (116 pages; Harper), is an account of the Master, shortly to be canonized by the Memorial Commission, as related by one of the original apostles of his greatness, a Maine guide.

Artemus Ward: A Biography and a Bibliography, by Don. C. Seitz (338 pages; Harper), is the first complete biography of the man whose spelling is comically familiar in every American household. There is no evidence however that Charles Farrar Browne would ever, in the event of a longer life, have approached the depths plumbed by Mark Twain.

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Of The Dial, published fortnightly at New York, N. Y. for October 1,
1919. State of New York, County of New York, ss.

Before me, a notary public in and for the State and county aforesaid,
personally appeared Oswald W. Knauth, who, having been duly sworn
according to law, deposes and says that he is the business manager of
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OSWALD W. KNAUTH.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 26th day of September, 1919.
Charles A. Benedict, Notary Public, New York Country, N. Y.
(Seal) My commission expires March 30, 1921.

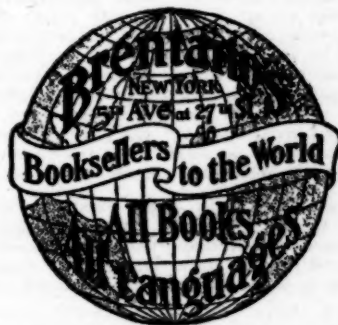
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The Heart's Domain, by Georges Duhamel, translated by Eleanor Stinson Brooks (199 pages; Century), is reviewed on page 352.

Books and Things, by Philip Littell (283 pages; Harcourt, Brace & Howe; New York), collects a miscellany from the author's urbanely gossip department in *The New Republic*, a department the more delightful for being rather less bookish than thingy. Review later.

The Theatre Through its Stage Door, by David Belasco (246 pages; Harper), admits the reader to a realm of business as usual, where self-made actors and actresses win the rewards of ability, loyalty, and industry; one is surprised to find that Mr. Belasco's vocabulary is so largely that of Mr. Rockefeller and Mr. Carnegie.

Plays: Second Series, by Jacinto Benavente, translated by John Garrett Underhill (309 pages; Scribner), adds to the already published first series four more plays by the Spanish dramatist: *No Smoking*, *The Governor's Wife*, *Princess Bebé*, and *Autumnal Roses*. The translator's preface to this volume, which is devoted primarily to questions of technique, quotes a generous number of the playwright's "maxims and observations on the stage." The two volumes will be reviewed by Williams Haynes in an early issue.

The Gibson Upright, by Booth Tarkington and Harry Leon Wilson (117 pages; Doubleday, Page), a play announced for Broadway production this season, was reviewed on page 115 of *THE DIAL* for August 9, following its serial appearance in *The Saturday Evening Post*.

Pictures of the Floating World, by Amy Lowell (257 pages; Macmillan), is reviewed by Conrad Aiken on page 331.

Haunts and By-Paths and Other Poems, by J. Thorne Smith, Jr. (136 pages; Stokes), is too early in print. There are a few pieces here—as notably *Sea Song*—which will remain authentic of their maker's genuine, if not strikingly novel, imagery and lilting cadence; there are many passages in which he is fitfully present; and there is a great deal that might have been written by any not too clumsy apprentice to the poets. At least, the author of *Biltmore Oswald* has proved himself capable of something more enduring than war humor.

A World of Windows, by Charles Hanson Towne (90 pages; Doran.) If, as the jacket informs us, Mr. Towne "is a poet wherever he goes, and in whatever medium he writes," he has here given himself a great deal of supererogatory pains in rhythm and rhyme.

Jurgen: A Comedy of Justice, by James Branch Cabell (368 pages; McBride), another narrative extravaganza by America's master ironist, is as blithely fantastic, as shrewdly pointed, and is launched with as impudent a flourish of spurious erudition as any of its predecessors. These were discussed by Wilson Follett in *THE DIAL* for April 25, 1918. *Jurgen* will be reviewed shortly.

The Four Roads, by Sheila Kaye-Smith (320 pages; Doran), concerns itself with Sussex in war time. Half a dozen country folk are shown in their relations to the struggle; some of them are redeemed by it, some engulfed and ruined. Miss Kaye-Smith is truthful without being dogmatically pessimistic. Review later.

Deadham Hard, by "Lucas Malet"—Mary St. Leger Harrison—(503 pages; Dodd, Mead), is reviewed on page 350.

Iron City, by M. H. Hedges (318 pages; Boni & Livright), follows the parallel battle fronts between the old and the new attitudes in industrial and academic life. A first novel, its unusual merits in irony and sound characterization are obscured by familiar faults in direction and handling.

Yellowleaf, by "Sacha Gregory" (319 pages; Lippincott), is an unusual handling of fascinating materials. Had the author carried it through on the plane in which he began, it would rank as an exceptional piece of work; but as he nears the climax his grip relaxes and the conclusion lacks conviction. Mr. Gregory's story is told with imaginative skill and keen insight.

The Strongest, by Georges Clemenceau (317 pages; Doubleday, Page), gives a weak impression of the Tiger. Anatole France at his worst, say in *The Red Lily*, has limned a better picture of French society, whilst Henri Bordeaux at his best knows how to provide a swifter plot.

Oscar Montague—Paranoiac, by George Lincoln Walton, M. D. (303 pages; Lippincott), carries the hyphen of the title into the text; it is part novel and part treatise. Dr. Walton is the author of helpful books on *Why Worry?* and *Those Nerves*, which doubtless explains why his plunge into fiction is somewhat clinical.

John Stuyvesant Ancestor and Other People, by Alvin Johnson (252 pages; Harcourt, Brace, & Howe; New York), is reviewed on page 354.

Our Casualty and Other Stories, by G. A. Birmingham (280 pages; Doran), in which the author of General John Regan groups some cheerful tales from the outer edges of the war, includes half a dozen choice specimens of Irish and Ulster psychology calculated to show how unsettling to either party would be any Irish settlement that settled anything.

The Exploits of Bilge and Ma, by Peter Clark Macfarlane (300 pages; Little, Brown), form a set of tales in which exposition fences for an equal place with narration. The volume is one of the less embalmed kind of memorials to the destroyer fleet, and Admiral Sims' foreword is appropriate. Those who know the navy from the inside will find greatest amusement in the euphemisms whereby the author seeks to give the content of navy speech without using the actual and unprintable form.

The Doings of Raffles Haw, by A. Conan Doyle (199 pages; Doran), appears to be the product of an idle hour, done perhaps for its author's own amusement, but rather too mechanical in its mystery to yield much fascination.

Contributors

Winthrop Parkhurst studied the piano in New York and London until 1916 and was organist and choirmaster of the Madison Square Church, New York, until 1918. He has contributed plays, stories and criticism to numerous periodicals.

Through an unfortunate oversight Babette Deutsch's essay, *Two Solitudes*, in *THE DIAL* for October 4, reviewed *The Solitary*, by James Oppenheim, and *The Beloved Stranger*, by Witter Bynner, without naming their publishers. The former is published by Huebsch and the latter by Knopf.

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